

Weekly Column for January 10, 2008

News came this week from the New York State Division of Criminal Justice that violent crime in the City of Troy dropped 3.6 percent in 2007. This may come as a surprise to many of you that were inundated with election falsehoods during the fall of last year, but it does not come as a surprise to us.

For more than four years I have proudly promoted the City of Troy as the safest large City in the entire area, and the numbers released by New York State clearly show that this indeed is the truth. While other City's have slightly more residents than Troy, the crime numbers there are double and even triple what we experience.

Fighting crime is a task that must be done so honestly and efficiently. There is no room for cooking numbers or ignoring problems. Early last summer, we saw a spike in crime, particularly in the area of North Central Troy, and we acted. The first action was the move to relocate the substation into an area that needs a strong police presence 24 hours a day. That substation will pay great dividends in the coming year. Perhaps more importantly, we created a Street Crimes Unit to pursue criminals and situations that were causing the most problems. That unit has been a great success, and a shining example of solid police work.

In 2008, we hope to continue to knock that crime number down even more. There were certainly areas, or hotspots, that popped up last year that we need to focus on. We will continue to fight back using a number of methods including the use of neighborhood watch groups. Several of these have sprouted up in the past few years, and have really advanced beyond what neighborhood watches used to be. They do not focus solely on problems, but more importantly, working together, communicating, and striving to find solutions to the issues that urban areas are faced with in the 21st century. Rather than just complaining, they offer solutions. Most of the time, these are invaluable.

So if you are looking for a New Year's resolution, I have a perfect one. Join a local neighborhood group. There are many in the City of Troy, covering just about all areas. If there is not one in your neighborhood- even better- start a group. We will guide you through the early hills that need to be climbed, put you in touch with those that have been successful around the City, and even help out with monthly speakers about any issue that may be important to your neighborhood.

Many people have wonderful ideas that can be used to improve the City of Troy. Do so in an effective way and communicate. Help resolve the problem, not just talk about it. Call my office at 270-4401 and someone will be happy to get you the information you need to improve your neighborhood.

Harry J Tutunjian
Mayor of Troy